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AUTHOR Goodwin, Judy; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This document describes how Philadelphia's (Pennsylvania) Asian students who exited from the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESOL) program in June 1990 at seven New Instructional Model schools functioned in mainstream classes. The study population included 42 high school students, 6 middle school students, and 13 elementary school students. The data were collected through student focus groups, interviews with each student's English and science teachers, and an analysis of end-of-year marks. The results indicate that 88 percent of the high school students felt that the ESOL program adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers, although they would have liked more intensive practice in their English language skills. Ninety percent of the high school students reported passing all subjects in mainstream classes. Teachers reported that 56 percent of the high school students still had problems with their English skills. The six middle school students all felt that the ESOL program adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers. Five of the six middle school students reported that they were passing all subjects in mainstream classes, but two students felt that they still had problems with English. Teacher interviews confirmed this finding. Of the 13 elementary school students, teachers reported that 8 students had no problems with their classroom work. Analyses of student grades showed a majority receiving As and Bs in all subjects. Statistical data are provided in four tables. (JB)

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The School District of Philadelphia

ASIAN REMEDIAL PLAN

A STUDY OF ASIAN STUDENTS WHO
EXITED FROM ESOL AT THE SEVEN
"ORIGINAL" NEW INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL SCHOOLS

REPORT NO. 9209

October, 1991

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UD 028 625

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Educational Programs Research Unit

Report Prepared By:

Judy Goodwin, Research Associate
Jacqueline Landau, Research Assistant
Keh-nan Li, Research Assistant
David Patton, Research Assistant

of the

ESOL/Bilingual Evaluation Unit

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was designed to assess how Asian students who had exited from ESOL in June 1990 at the seven "original" New Instructional Model Schools were functioning in mainstream classes. Of the sixty-five Asian students who had exited, three were returned to ESOL and one transferred to a school outside the system. Therefore, the population in the study was composed of forty-two high school, six middle and thirteen elementary school students.

Student focus groups were conducted with the sixty-one remaining exited students. Each student's English and Science teachers were also interviewed to gain their perspective of how the students were functioning. In addition, an analysis of student performance as measured by end-of-year marks was conducted in English, Mathematics, the Sciences, History, Health and Physical Education.

The results indicate that 88% (n=35) of the high school students who participated in student focus groups felt that the ESOL program had adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers, although they would have liked more intensive practice in their English language skills. While 90% reported passing all subjects in mainstream classes, 85% felt that they were still having problems with their English language skills. Subjects most frequently mentioned by high school students as presenting difficulty were the Sciences and History. When asked about their future plans, all but one student hoped to go to college. High school teachers reported that 56% of the students were still having problems with their English language skills. Science and English teachers often presented contradictory views of how the exited students contributed in class and whether they interacted with their mainstream peers. However, at least one of each student's teachers reported that 86% of the students contributed in class and that 79% interacted with their mainstream peers.

The six middle school students all felt that the ESOL program had adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers. Five of the students reported that they were passing all subjects in mainstream classes but two students felt they were still having problems with English. Teacher interviews confirmed this. Teachers also described four of the students as quiet and contributing in class only when called on. However, for the most part, middle school students were reported as interacting with their mainstream peers.

Elementary school students were unable to provide specific information about their ESOL experience, but twelve of the thirteen students indicated that they were receiving passing grades in all subjects. Teachers reported that eight of the students were having no problems with their classwork. The five remaining students were still having problems with their English. Nine students were viewed as contributing in class and eight as interacting with their mainstream peers. The others were described as interacting primarily with Asian students.

An analysis of student performance, as measured by end-of-year marks, showed that percentages of exited high school students receiving passing marks (A-D) ranged from 85% to 100% in all subjects including English. In addition the majority received A's and B's in every subject but Social Science and American History. At the middle school level, five of the six exited students received passing marks (mostly A's and B's) in all subjects. The sixth student failed English and Reading. At the elementary level, all thirteen exited students received passing marks (mostly A's and B's) in all subjects including English and Reading.

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In compliance with the Remedial Plan for Services to Asian LEP Students (1988), New Instructional Models (NIM) were implemented in 32 schools serving Asian LEP students in 1990-1991. The models include: 1) four levels of ESOL instruction, 2) sheltered and co-taught content area classes at the secondary level and 3) bilingual instructional support periods.

In 1988-1989, three schools launched the New Instructional Models: Southwark Elementary, Cooke Middle and Furness High. In 1989-1990, four more schools were added: Kirkbride Elementary, University City High (UCHS), South Philadelphia High (SPHS) and Olney High. These seven schools are the focus of this study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to assess how Asian students who had exited from ESOL in June 1990 at the seven "original" NIM schools were functioning in mainstream classes. Exited student focus groups and teacher interviews were conducted in May 1991. The findings of this phase of the study can be found in Section I. An analysis of exited students' academic performance can be found in Section II.

SECTION I

IN-DEPTH STUDY OF STUDENT AND TEACHER PERCEPTIONS

METHODOLOGY

Sixty-five Asian students who had exited from ESOL in June 1990 at the seven "original" NIM schools were the focus of this study. Student focus groups were conducted by the evaluation team at these schools in May 1991. In addition, each student's English and Science teachers were interviewed to obtain a broader perspective of how the students were functioning in mainstream classes.

THE SAMPLE

Of the sixty-five exited students, three (one high school and two elementary school students) were returned to ESOL in the 1990-1991 school year. One additional high school student had transferred to a boarding school outside of Philadelphia. The remaining sixty-one students were the subjects of this study. The number of exited students who participated in the focus groups and the number of teachers who were interviewed at each school were as follows:

HIGH SCHOOLS

UCHS	=	3 students, 6 teachers
SPHS	=	11 students, 11 teachers
Furness	=	9 students, 3 teachers
Olney	=	17 students, 17 teachers
Total	=	40 students, 37 teachers

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Cooke	=	6 students, 9 teachers

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Kirkbride	=	10 students, 7 teachers
Southwark	=	1 student, 3 teachers
Total	=	11 students, 10 teachers

Note: Four students were absent, two from SPHS and two from Southwark.

1. IN-DEPTH STUDY OF EXITED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Forty of the forty-two Asian high school students who had exited from ESOL participated in student focus groups at UCHS, SPHS, Furness, and Olney High. Two students were absent on the days the evaluators were at the the school. Students were asked: 1) how long they had been in the ESOL program, 2) whether they felt that the ESOL program had adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers, 3) whether they had taken any sheltered or co-taught classes, 4) what subjects or school tasks they were still finding difficult, and 5) what they hoped to do after high school.

FINDINGS

Thirty-three of the forty students reported being in ESOL for two to three years. The remaining seven students had been in ESOL for only one year. Eighty-eight percent of the students felt that the ESOL program had adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers, although they would have liked more intensive practice in their English skills. Thirty-nine students (85%) felt they were still having problems with their English skills. Approximately one third of the students (n=13) reported having difficulty with Communication Skills, another third (n=12) reported having difficulty with Writing Skills and nine other students reported having difficulty with Reading Skills.

Although only thirteen students recalled taking sheltered or co-taught classes, they considered these classes helpful because the pace was slower and because they were able to receive help whenever they needed

it. Ninety percent of the students reported receiving passing marks in all subjects. Of the four remaining students, three had failed one subject and the fourth student reported failing because of absenteeism. Subjects most frequently mentioned by students as presenting difficulty were the Sciences (n=14) and History (n=6). Twenty-five percent reported having no difficulties in any subject.

When asked about their future plans, all but one student hoped to go to college.

TEACHER INTERVIEWS

The evaluation team interviewed each of the students' English and Science teachers in order to gain their perspective concerning how the forty-two exited students were functioning in mainstream classes. A total of thirty-seven high school teachers were interviewed. Teachers were asked: 1) whether they noticed any particular problems that the exited students were having in class, in completing assignments or in taking tests, 2) how these students contributed in class compared with mainstream students, and 3) whether the exited students interacted with their mainstream peers.

FINDINGS

English and Science teachers did not always agree in their perceptions of how students fuctioned. Of the forty-two students discussed, sixteen (38%) were reported by both teachers (English and Science) as having no problems in class, in completing assignments or in taking tests. One or both teachers reported that twenty-two of the students (52%) were having

difficulty with their English skills. The four remaining students were having difficulty because of absenteeism.

When questioned about how students contributed in class, both teachers agreed that thirteen of the exited students (31%) contributed in both English and Science classes. For twenty-three of the students (55%) one teacher reported that the students contributed in class, while the other teacher said they did not. The remaining students (n=6) were seen by both teachers as not contributing unless called on. Reasons given were shyness or difficulty with language skills.

When asked whether the exited students interacted with their mainstream peers, both English and Science teachers agreed that 43% (n=18) of the students mixed well, and that 21% (n=9) tended to interact primarily with Asian students. Teachers presented differing points of view on the remaining 36% (n=15), i.e., while one teacher reported that the student interacted with mainstream peers, the other said the student interacted primarily with Asian students.

2. IN-DEPTH STUDY OF EXITED MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The six middle school students who had exited from ESOL participated in a focus group. These students were all from Cooke Middle School. Questions asked were the same as those asked of high school students which can be found on page 4 of this report.

FINDINGS

Four of the six students had been in ESOL for one year. The two remaining students had been in ESOL for two years. All felt that the ESOL program had adequately prepared them to compete with native English speakers. Two students reported that they were still having trouble with some aspects of English, one with reading comprehension and the other with pronunciation.

Most of the students did not recall taking sheltered or co-taught classes. Five of the students indicated that they were receiving passing grades in all subjects. The sixth student had failed one course.

TEACHER INTERVIEWS

The evaluation team interviewed each student's English and Science teachers. A total of nine middle school teachers were interviewed. Questions asked were the same as those asked of high school teachers which can be found on page 5 of this report.

FINDINGS

Of the six students discussed in the interviews, English and Science teachers agreed that three of the students were having no problems in

class, in completing assignments or in taking tests. Two of the students were reported as having problems with their English, although they were doing well in Science. The remaining student was having no problems in English class, but the Science teacher reported that the student had difficulty understanding test questions.

When asked how the students contributed in class, teachers reported that only two of the students contributed. The remaining four students were described as quiet and tended to answer questions only when called to respond. In terms of student interaction, teachers reported that four of the students interacted well with their mainstream peers. One other student interacted well in English class but not in Science. The remaining student was described as being very shy and having only one friend, an African-American.

3. IN-DEPTH STUDY OF EXITED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Eleven of the fifteen elementary school students who had exited from ESOL were interviewed. These students were from the Kirkbride and Southwark Elementary Schools. Two students were absent on the days the evaluators were at the schools, and two students had been returned to ESOL. Questions asked were the same as those asked of high school students with the exception of Question 5 regarding future plans. These questions can be found on page 4 of this report.

FINDINGS

Although the students were aware that they had been in ESOL, most were unable to recall how long they had been in the program. School records showed that all but one student had been in the ESOL program for at least three years. Student responses to specific questions about the ESOL program tended to be vague. However, all but one student indicated that they were receiving passing marks in all subjects. The remaining student reported failing English.

TEACHER INTERVIEWS

The evaluation team interviewed each student's English and Science teachers. A total of ten elementary school teachers were interviewed. Questions asked were the same as those asked of high school teachers which can be found on page 5 of this report.

FINDINGS

Of the thirteen exited elementary school students discussed in the interviews, teachers agreed that eight of the students were having no

problems in class, in completing assignments or in taking tests. The remaining five students were still having problems related to their English skills. Problems mentioned were poor comprehension skills, trouble with word problems, limited vocabulary and limited background in American culture.

When asked about student contributions in class, teachers reported that nine students contributed. Three students were described as too shy to contribute although they were excellent students. The remaining student was having problems with English and was failing this subject.

In terms of student-to-student interaction, teachers reported that eight of the students interacted with their mainstream peers and five interacted primarily with other Asian students.

SECTION II

AN ANALYSIS OF EXITED ESOL STUDENT MARKS (END-OF-YEAR)

TABLE 1

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

EXITED ESOL STUDENTS' MARKS (A-F)
IN HUMANITIES AND MATHEMATICS
FINAL REPORT PERIOD, 1991

Subject Marks	Exited Students
Humanities:	
ENGLISH/LANG. ARTS	(N=42)
A/B	65%
C/D	33%
F	2%
SOCIAL SCIENCE	(N=25)
A/B	38%
C/D	48%
F	14%
AMERICAN HISTORY	(N=10)
A/B	40%
C/D	50%
F	10%
Mathematics:	
ELEMENTARY FUNCTIONS	(N=13)
A/B	54%
C/D	31%
F	15%
ALGEBRA 2	(N=13)
A/B	69%
C/D	31%
F	0
GEOMETRY	(N=15)
A/B	67%
C/D	20%
F	13%

Findings:

- Percentages of Asian high school students receiving passing marks (A-D) in the subjects listed in the table ranged from 85% in Elementary Functions to 100% in Algebra 2.
- The majority of Asian high school students received A's and B's in English (65%), Elementary Functions (54%), Algebra 2 (69%), and Geometry (67%), but not in Social Science (38%) or American History (40%).

TABLE 2

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

EXITED ESOL STUDENTS' MARKS (A-F)
IN SCIENCE AND HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION
FINAL REPORT PERIOD, 1991

Subject Marks	Exited Students
Science:	
PHYSICS	(N=17)
A/B	59%
C/D	41%
F	0
CHEMISTRY	(N=11)
A/B	82%
C/D	18%
F	0
Health/Physical Education:	
HEALTH	(N=32)
A/B	72%
C/D	22%
F	6%
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	(N=23)
A/B	92%
C/D	4%
F	4%

Findings:

- Percentages of Asian high school students receiving passing marks (A-D) in the subjects listed in the table ranged from 94% in Health to 100% in Chemistry and Physics.

- The majority of Asian high school students received A's and B's in all the subjects listed, ranging from 59% in Physics to 92% in Physical Education.

TABLE 3

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

EXITED ESOL STUDENTS' MARKS (A-F)
FINAL REPORT PERIOD, 1991

Subject Marks	Exited Students
ENGLISH	(N=6)
A/B	66%
C/D	17%
F	17%
READING	(N=6)
A/B	83%
C/D	0
F	17%
SOCIAL STUDIES	(N=6)
A/B	83%
C/D	17%
F	0
MATHEMATICS	(N=6)
A/B	67%
C/D	33%
F	0
SCIENCE	(N=6)
A/B	83%
C/D	17%
F	0

Findings:

- Five of the six exited middle school students received passing marks in all subjects; the sixth student failed English and Reading.
- Most of these students received A's and B's in all subjects.

TABLE 4

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

EXITED ESOL STUDENTS' MARKS (A-F)
FINAL REPORT PERIOD, 1991

Subject Marks	Exited Students
ENGLISH/LANG. ARTS	(N=13)
A/B	85%
C/D	15%
F	0
READING	(N=13)
A/B	85%
C/D	15%
F	0
SOCIAL STUDIES	(N=13)
A/B	85%
C/D	15%
F	0
MATHEMATICS	(N=13)
A/B	92%
C/D	8%
F	0
SCIENCE	(N=13)
A/B	100%
C/D	0
F	0

Findings:

- All thirteen Asian elementary students received passing marks (A-D) in all subjects.
- Percentages of Asian students receiving A's and B's ranged from 85% (n=11) in English, Reading, and Mathematics to 100% in Science.